Fear and Loathing in Populist Campaigns? Comparing the Communication Style of Populists and Non-populists in Elections Worldwide

Alessandro Nai

View supplementary material ⧉

Published online: 28 Sep 2018.

Submit your article to this journal ⧉

View Crossmark data ⧉

OPEN ACCESS   Check for updates

Fear and Loathing in Populist Campaigns? Comparing the Communication Style of Populists and Non-populists in Elections Worldwide

ALESSANDRO NAI 🆔

*Amsterdam School of Communication Research (ASCoR), University of Amsterdam,
Amsterdam, The Netherlands*

*Populists are often described as using a more aggressive, offensive,
and anxiety-fuelled rhetoric than non-populists. Yet, little system-
atic evidence exists that this is the case. This article presents the first
large-scale systematic study comparing the communication style of
populists and non-populists worldwide, and introduces an original
dataset based on expert ratings. The dataset contains systematic
information for 195 candidates having competed in 40 national
elections worldwide between June 2016 and June 2017. Results
highlight that, controlling for "usual suspects" that drive negativity
and emotional campaigns, populist campaigns are 15%
more negative and contain 11% more character attacks and 8%
more fear messages than campaigns of non-populist candidates.*

*KEYWORDS attack politics, comparative political
communication, emotional messages, enthusiasm, fear, negative
campaigning, populism*

Address correspondence to Alessandro Nai, Amsterdam School of Communication
Research (ASCoR), University of Amsterdam, Postbus 15793, 1001 NG, Amsterdam. E-mail:
a.nai@uva.nl; www.alessandro-nai.com
Supplemental data for this article can be accessed on the publisher's website.

INTRODUCTION

No element has a more central stage in the contemporary narrative about the crisis of democratic institutions than populism – identified as symptom or cause of nefarious occurrences, such as the increasing public disaffection with politics, entrenched suspicion about democratic procedures, and boosted saliency of fringe movements and issues. Populism, it is often argued, is a disrupting force in traditional electoral mechanisms by reshaping the dynamics of "politics as usual." A central part of this "disruption" narrative is the fact that populists are atypical political animals, with a different style than mainstream candidates. A rather common image compares them to "drunken dinner guest[s]" (Arditi 2007: 78) acting at odds with social norms and taking pleasure in displaying "bad manners" (Moffitt 2016) or generally adopting a "low" style of politics (Ostiguy 2009). The style of populists, it is argued, "emphasises agitation, spectacular acts, exaggeration, calculated provocations, and the intended breech of political and socio-cultural taboos" (Heinisch 2003: 94), often by introducing "a more negative, hardened tone to the debate" (Immerzeel and Pickup 2015: 350). Concrete cases are, for instance, Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) candidates known for "intentionally provoking scandals" (Schmuck, Matthes, and Boomgaarden 2017: 88), Trump's campaigning style "unique in the vitriol of its rhetoric" (Eiermann 2016: 34), or the "carnivalesque attacks" (MacMillan 2017) against the "ruling class" (*casta*) by the left-wing populists of Podemos in Spain or the Movimento Cinque Stelle (M5S) in Italy.

In short, there seems to be a shared opinion that populists have a political style based on provocations, offensive language, aggressiveness, and negative emotionality (Heinisch 2003; Oliver and Rahn 2016). This assumption is far from trivial, as the communication style of populists is likely to have electoral consequences. On the immediate term, populist candidates might benefit from a bombastic style and increase their chances of success over mainstream candidates, because their "theatrics provide welcome entertainment to a voting public often bored by conventional politics" (Heinisch 2003: 95). Systemic effects are also likely, as evidence exists that the "offensive" campaigning style of populists might depress interest and participation of some segments of the population (Immerzeel and Pickup 2015). More broadly, more harsh and aggressive forms of electoral communication have been linked with systemic increases in cynicism and disaffection with politics (Nai and Seeberg 2018), off which populist movements seem to feed. Beyond electoral outcomes, the typical rhetorical style of populists and their proverbial "bad manners" participate to the mediatization of politics and are a perfect fit for the tendency of media toward "dramatization, polarisation, and prioritisation of conflict" (Moffitt 2016: 77). It is thus necessary to understand how populists communicate to fully

comprehend why populist movements in contemporary democracies are so appealing to large segments of voters.

And, yet, very little systematic evidence exists. To the best of our knowledge, the assumption that populists have a communication style based on aggressiveness and negative emotionality has never been tested in a large-scale comparative setting, and most evidence come from case-studies (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Bos and Brants 2014; Aalberg et al. 2017). The lack of systematic and comparative evidence about how populists communicate illustrates a paradox: widespread attention has been provided in recent years to populism and populist communication more in general and, yet, very little is known about *the communication style of populists*. The reason for this paradox is that "populism," broadly understood, has been mostly studied *either* through an actor-centered *or* a communication-centered approach: "whereas the first approach understands populism as an ideology that, in principle, is decoupled from how populists communicate, the second approach primarily understands populism as a particular communication style" (Stanyer, Salgado, and Strömbäck 2017: 353; see also Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Aalberg et al. 2017). What seem to be missing is research that compares "the communication strategies, tactics, styles, and rhetoric of a larger set of political actors – populists, as well as non-populists" (Stanyer, Salgado, and Strömbäck 2017: 363).

The objective of this article is precisely to provide such evidence, that is, comparing the communication style of populists and non-populists worldwide in a systematic way. We focus on two rhetoric elements associated with the typical descriptions of a "populist style" (Heinisch 2003; Moffitt 2016): the "negative" tone of their campaign and the use of emotional appeals. Are populists more likely than their "mainstream" counterparts to "go negative" on their rivals and use campaign messages intended to elicit an emotional answer (fear, or even enthusiasm)?

We answer this question via an original comparative dataset that contains systematic information about campaigning style of 195 candidates having competed in 40 international elections between June 2016 and June 2017 – virtually all national elections that happened worldwide in that period, thus providing a comprehensive snapshot of campaigning style over the course of one year in elections across the world. The dataset, gathered through systematic expert surveys, includes information about key recent elections in the USA, France, the UK, Russia, the Netherlands, Spain, Austria, Australia, Northern Ireland, and beyond. The data also include information about regions of the globe that are comparatively less present in the literature, such as the African continent (e.g., Zambia, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco), Eastern Europe (e.g., Belarus, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania), the Balkans (e.g., Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia, Kosovo), and Eastern Asia (e.g., Japan, South Korea, Hong

Kong). Most importantly, the dataset contains information about the campaigning style of a wide palette of candidates, including many *populist* candidates such as Donald Trump, Geert Wilders, Marine Le Pen, Norbert Hofer, Pablo Iglesias, Daniel Ortega, Boyko Borisov, and many more. The full list of elections and candidates is in supplementary Appendix A.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Are populists more likely than their "mainstream" counterparts to "go negative" on their rivals and use campaign messages intended to elicit an emotional answer (fear, or even enthusiasm)? To answer this question, we first need to identify who the "populists" are, and what a communication style based on "negative messages" and "emotional appeals" is. The next subsections review the relevant literature in this sense.

Populism as Anti-elitism and People-Centrism

Within the maelstrom of research on populism, seen in turn as, "a pathology, a style, a syndrome and a doctrine" (Stanley 2008: 95), the two most prominent avenues are those who define it as an ideology (Mudde 2004; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013) or as a communication style (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Aalberg et al. 2016). The first strand sees populism as "a general, abstract concept about politics and society" (Reinemann et al. 2016: 13), an ideological feature of parties and candidates. Within this approach, most research adopts Cas Mudde's definition of populism as a "thin-centered" ideology "that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite,' and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people" (Mudde 2004: 543). Following the same idea, populism is an ideology that "advocates the sovereign rule of the people as a homogeneous body" (Abts and Rummens 2007: 409). What distinguishes populists from other mainstream candidates, however, is less their political or ideological profile than the message they express (Bakker et al. 2016; Rooduijn 2014; Rooduijn, de Lange, and Van der Brug 2014).

With this in mind, a second strand of research builds on this abstract definition of populism as a "thin" ideology, but moves beyond the nature of parties and candidates and focuses on the features of their discourse (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Aalberg et al. 2016). In this case, populism becomes "a communication frame that appeals to and identifies with the people, and pretends to speak in their name [… ,] a conspicuous exhibition of closeness to (ordinary) citizens" (Jagers and Walgrave 2007: 322). Although several

elements can be associated with a "populist" form of communication, two elements seem to stand out – and echo Cas Mudde's (2004) definition of populism: people-centrism and anti-elitism (Rooduijn and Pauwels 2011: 1273). First, "the people" is "both the central audience of populists, as well as the subject that populists attempt to render present" (Moffitt and Tormey 2014: 391). Referring to "the people" as an entity that has to be cherished and promoted is at the very heart of the definition of what populism entails, and not only etymologically. Appeals to "the people," a specific national group (usually the majority, as in nativist discourses; Mudde 2010), "the citizens," "the country," and so forth sets up a tension between two groups: those who are in, and those who are out. Populist appeals explicitly put the focus on the in-group, composed by individuals that are sovereign by nature, and often underprivileged or misunderstood (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013). Vaguely defined, the "people" efficiently serves in populist communication to unite "different audiences [...] under a common label despite differing demands or values" (Reinemann et al. 2016: 16). Second, populist communication targets "the system" (the government, the institutions, the politicians themselves), usually seen as out-of-touch, globally promoting an anti-establishment stance "against elites who live in ivory towers and only pursue their own interests" (Jagers and Walgrave 2007: 324). This differentiation between the out-of-touch elites and the "simple" citizens whose demands are not met is an additional demarcation between "us" and "them," which this time operates vertically (instead of horizontally, between the in- and the out-group; Reinemann et al. 2016).

Whether a feature of the ideological stance of competing actors or a characteristic of their communication style, both approaches have in common that populists are seen as political actors that advocate for people-centrism and anti-elitism, or more generally an opposition between the common "people" and the (corrupt, wicked) elite. We also rely on this definition, which allows us to classify populist candidates independently of their ideological alignment on the political spectrum (left-right) or their strategic positioning (e.g., as opposition forces).

Negative and Emotional Campaigns

Going "negative" refers for a candidate to the act of verbally attacking his or her opponents (on their program, values, policy propositions, record, character, and so on) instead of advocating his or her own strengths and ideas (Lau and Pomper 2004; Geer 2006; Nai and Walter 2015). Intrinsic in the definition of negative campaigning is thus the core element of message directionality, which is targeted outward (toward the opponents) and not inward (toward the sponsor of the message). A more qualified definition of negative campaigning differentiates between two basic types of attacks. On

the one hand, *issue-based* or *policy* attacks are framed on the idea that the rivals' performance or program on specific policies is bad or harmful. On the other hand, *person-based* or *character* attacks are framed toward the rivals themselves, and try to expose the personal flaws of the rivals' character, personality, values, or behavior. Policy and character attacks are not only different in nature, but they also have potentially different effects on those who are exposed to them (Kahn and Kenney 1999; Carraro and Castelli 2010). Character attacks have been shown to be more effective than issue attacks (Brooks and Geer 2007) while being at the same time riskier, as they face a stronger probability of "backlash" effects than policy attacks (Budesheim, Houston, and DePaola 1996; Carraro, Gawronski, and Castelli 2010). Furthermore, character attacks are particularly disliked by the public, and are more likely to depress participation and turnout than policy attacks (Min 2004). We also rely on the distinction between these two main types of attacks.

Research on the reasons why candidates decide to "go negative" usually assumes that this decision is a strategic one, with candidates weighting between uncertain benefits and potential costs of attack messages (Lau and Pomper 2004; Nai and Sciarini 2015). On the benefits side, political actors "go negative" in an attempt to attract undecided voters or to diminish positive feelings for opposing candidates or parties, thus increasing indirectly their popular support (Budesheim, Houston, and DePaola 1996; Lau, Sigelman, and Rovner 2007). On the costs side, running negative campaigns is a risky strategy, as attacks are mostly disliked by the public (Fridkin and Kenney 2011) and can thus "backlash," generating negative feelings toward the attacker instead of the target (Roese and Sande 1993; Fridkin and Kenney 2004). This risk, associated with uncertain payoffs, has been shown to alter the strategic behavior of candidates and acts as an incentive to go especially negative when they are facing a prospect of electoral failure (Skaperdas and Grofman 1995; Maier and Jansen 2017; Nai and Sciarini 2015), and have thus "nothing to lose anymore." Next to those strategic determinants, evidence also exists that the use of attacks depends on personal characteristics of the candidates, such as their gender (Kahn 1996; Fridkin, Kenney, and Woodall 2009). This being, no systematic evidence exists that populist candidates are more likely to rely on a negative and hardened rhetoric, as some suggest (Immerzeel and Pickup 2015).

Next to the use of attacks, perhaps no other element stands out as symptomatic of modern political campaigning as the use of appeals intended to stir emotions in those who are exposed to them (Jerit 2004; Brader 2006; Crigler, Just, and Belt 2006; Ridout and Searles 2011). Emotions are a powerful determinant of social and political behavior, as modelled by the Affective Intelligence Theory (AIT; Marcus and MacKuen 1993; Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen 2000). The AIT assumes that people rely on

previously established beliefs in familiar and positive circumstances, but tend instead to abandon their convictions and seek more information when they face novel or threatening circumstances. A key difference exists between enthusiasm and fear/anxiety: anxious citizens are likely to pay more attention to information and campaigns (Steenbergen and Ellis 2006), which makes them easier targets for persuasion (Nai, Schemeil, and Marie 2017). Enthusiastic citizens, on the other hand, are more likely to get invested and participate (Marcus and MacKuen, 1993), but they do so by relying strongly on their previously held partisan beliefs and attitudes (Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen 2000; Brader 2006). All in all, this body of research shows that emotions have the power to shape political and electoral behaviors. Campaign messages able to stir those emotions, thus, are particularly likely to be effective to get their message across, and thus candidates have strong incentives to rely on emotional campaigns. Fear appeals, for instance, are very common in modern electoral campaigns and often takes inspiration from "scare campaigns" in health communication (Witte and Allen 2000). Emotional messages "allow candidates to capitalize on the time-honored strategy of emphasizing widely shared, or consensual, values and goals [… and are thus] powerful precisely because they project images that are universally valued or reviled" (Jerit 2004: 566).

    Research on the determinants of emotional appeals in electoral campaigns is sensibly less developed than research on negative campaigning, but overall points to relatively similar trends; most characteristics of the candidates and the context that drive negativity (e.g., incumbency status, partisanship, competitiveness of the race) have been shown to also affect the use of fear and enthusiasm appeals (Jerit 2004; Brader 2006; Ridout and Searles 2011). As for negativity, though, no systematic and comparative evidence exists that populist candidates are more likely to rely on emotional appeals, as a popular view seems to suggest (Heinisch 2003).

EXPECTATIONS: POPULISM AND CAMPAIGNING STYLE

Why should populists be more (or less) likely to rely on these forms of communication? Starting with campaign negativity, it seems rather intuitive to associate populists with a stronger reliance to attack messages given the antagonistic nature of their positioning (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Reinemann et al. 2016). Anti-system, anti-establishment, anti-elites, populist candidates exist in opposition, and in confrontation with their "established" rivals. This should normally translate into "a more negative, hardened" campaign tone (Immerzeel and Pickup 2015: 350). When it comes to the "type" of attacks, good reasons exist to expect populists to rely more likely on character attacks (vs. policy attacks). Character attacks are often seen as

a more spiteful form of negative campaigning, because seeking "to raise yourself up by dragging them down" in the mud (Benoit and Glantz 2017: 8). In this sense, they seem ideally tailored for populist candidates usually seen as abrasive, uninhibited, and bad-behaved.

Turning to emotional campaigning, fear appeals should be a key component in populist communication (Heinisch 2003). By definition turned toward the promotion of the "people" against evil and out-of-touch elites, populists should naturally rely on messages that highlight real or symbolic threats, fueling fears for the loss of identity or economic prosperity (Mols and Jetten 2016; Matthes and Schmuck 2017). Research in cognitive psychology shows indeed that fear appeals – especially when framed on out-group issues – are likely to induce feelings of impending threats for the in-group (e.g., related to terrorist attacks or uncontrolled immigration; Huddy et al. 2005; Brader, Valentino, and Suhay 2008) which, in turn, intensify the solidarity and sense of shared belonging among members of the in-group and the rejection of the out-group (Bettencourt et al. 2001; Huddy 2003); in this sense, then, populist candidates have all reasons to play the fear card. Evidence supporting this claim exists, for instance, when it comes to populist fear appeals against asylum-seekers in Australia (Gale 2004) or Austria (Kienpointner 2008; Matthes and Schmuck 2017), or populist communication framing the crime issue through fear appeals in Latin American countries (Chevigny 2003). Trump's speech qualifying Mexican illegal immigrants as criminal, drug-addicts, and rapists is another textbook example (Kazin 2016). Finally, an argument could also be made that populists make a stronger use of *enthusiasm* appeals than non-populists – after all, one of the primary features of populist communication is to enhance the feeling of well-being of the in-group via messages that stir pride in the "people" (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Cranmer 2015). Appeals to the in-group are framed to create a sense of belonging to this "moral unit," with the intention to promote a positive identity of the group (Moffitt and Tormey 2014) and to "create a new social identify among citizens or to prime certain aspects of their social identity in order to unite them and generate a sense of belonging to an imagined community charged with positive emotions" (Reinemann et al. 2016: 19). The evidence supporting this claim is however scarce, and the rationale linking populists to a more "negative" rhetoric (both in terms of tone and direction of the emotional charge) seems more compelling overall. We thus globally expect populist candidates to make a stronger use of negative campaigns, character attacks, and fear appeals.

DATA AND METHODS

This section introduces the novel dataset we use to measure the campaigning style of candidates worldwide, discusses the central issue of measuring

negativity and emotional campaigning via expert judgments, introduces the covariates and models used to test our assumptions, and discusses the approach chosen to identify the "populist" candidates within our sample.

A New Dataset to Measure Electoral Campaigns Worldwide

We test our expectations through a new comparative dataset about campaigning strategies of candidates competing in elections worldwide (NEG[ex]).[1] The dataset covers all national elections held across the world between June 2016 and June 2017. Data are gathered through a systematic survey distributed to election-specific samples of national and international scholars in the weeks following each election.[2] After exclusion of missing values on all relevant variables, and considering only candidates for which at least five different experts provided independent evaluations, our models are run on 195 candidates having competed in 40 elections worldwide. Information is based on answers provided by 764 experts. Supplementary Appendix A lists all elections and candidates in our dataset, and specifies the number of expert opinions gathered for each election.

Measuring Political Communication Through Expert Surveys

We measure the content of electoral campaigns – in terms of negative campaigning and use of emotional campaign techniques – via aggregated expert judgments. Asking experts to evaluate the content of campaigns might seem unorthodox.[3] Scholars usually rely on content analysis of specific communication channels, such as party manifestos (Curini 2011), TV spots (Martin 2004), debates (Walter and Vliegenthart 2010; Maier and Jansen 2015), letters in newspapers (Elmelund-Praestekaer 2010), and so on. Although it usually provides precise measures and allows taking into account the temporal evolution of candidate campaigns, this approach has three main disadvantages within the framework of a large-scale comparative design. First, from a logistical standpoint, it would require a level of resources that is unheard of in contemporary social sciences research – imagine retrieving, transcribing, classifying, and coding campaign materials for virtually all countries across the globe in almost as many different languages. Second, from an empirical standpoint, it cannot be assumed that any given communication channel is used in an equivalent way (or, even, exists) in all elections worldwide. TV ads might be the primary vehicle for negativity in the United States, but they are banned in Switzerland; measuring populist communication in candidates' websites might be a good idea in countries where Internet penetration is high, but this is far from being the case everywhere and so on. Third, from a theoretical standpoint, content analysis of specific communication channels provides a channel-specific image of the

campaign, and is unable to qualify the campaign of candidates on the whole. Some candidates might use emotional appeals especially during debates, and not at all in TV commercials; coding only one or the other would, necessarily, provide a skewed image of their overall campaign. For instance, evidence exists that negativity differs across different communication channels (Elmelund-Praestekaer 2010; Walter and Vliegenthart 2010). Asking experts to assess the content of the overall campaign circumvents this problem, and provides a measure of campaign content that is not channel-specific, thus allowing for a broader understanding of the phenomenon.

Experts evaluated the tone of candidates' campaign on a scale ranging between −10 (the campaign was exclusively negative) and 10 (the campaign was exclusively positive); their answers were then aggregated to provide a score of campaign negativity for each competing candidate. Lacking independent evidence (e.g., alternative measures of campaign negativity) covering the large-scale scope of our dataset, it is virtually impossible to test for the external validity of this measure.

Gélineau and Blais (2015), authors of the only study comparing expert evaluations with content-based measures of negative campaigning, highlight however a great degree of convergence between the two measures; the authors conclude that "expert surveys should be considered as a serious option, especially in the context of cross-national research" (2015: 74).

The original measure might suffer from cross-cultural comparability issues due to the fact that "negativity" might not have the same meaning everywhere. Even though experts were provided with a clear definition of negative and positive campaigning, it is suitable in this case to rely on "anchoring vignettes" (King et al. 2004; Bakker et al. 2014), which allow setting up benchmarks for comparison across respondents. We adjusted the original variable via a series of six vignettes (six examples of campaign messages), that experts had to evaluate on a scale from −10 "very negative" to 10 "very positive." Comparing the expert evaluations of the campaign tone with how they "ranked" the different vignettes (i.e., how "negative" they evaluate each example to be) produces an adjusted measure of campaign negativity that ranges between 1 "very positive" and 7 "very negative." More complex parametric adjustments, based on ordered probit models (*gllamm* models; King et al. 2004) provided an alternative measure that we use in a series of robustness checks (next to the original unadjusted measure; see Supplementary Appendix E).[4]

Next to the overall campaign tone, experts were also asked to evaluate, for each candidate, the *type* of attack messages they mostly used against their rivals. The obtained variable ranges between 1 "exclusively policy attacks" and 5 "exclusively character attacks." Finally, experts were asked to assess the extent to which candidates used fear and enthusiasm

appeals; experts were provided with some selected examples of both fear and enthusiasm appeals,[5] and had to provide a score ranging between 0 "very low use" and 10 "very high use."

These four elements of communication are, of course, related. Negative campaigns are more likely to contain fear appeals, for instance (Crigler, Just, and Belt 2006). Even more, from a conceptual standpoint, these four elements seem to relate to an underlying rhetoric style that opposes an aggressive, loathing-loaded campaign (negative tone, character attacks, fear messages) to a more positive and uplifting campaigning style (positive tone and enthusiasm-arousing messages). Principal Component factor analyses (PCA) confirm the existence of one underlying dimensions common to those four elements (Eigenvalue = 2.56, 64% of explained variance). This underlying dimension opposes, on the one side, campaigns with a negative tone, character attacks, and fear appeals, and on the other side campaigns based on enthusiasm.[6] Table E1 in the Supplementary Appendix presents the correlation between the four original communication elements and this underlying dimension of "uplifting-loathing" rhetoric. We will perform our main analyses both on the four communication components separately and on the underlying dimension of political rhetoric.

Covariates

Our models are controlled by several relevant covariates that have been shown to affect campaigning style. At the candidate level, incumbents have been shown as less likely than challengers to go negative (Lau and Pomper 2004) and to use fear appeals (Brader 2006); candidates facing a prospect of electoral defeat should, instead, have stronger incentives to attack (Skaperdas and Grofman 1995; Elmelund-Praestekaer 2010), and so do candidates far from the ideological center (Walter, van der Brug, and van Praag 2014); some scattered evidence also exists that candidates on the right are more likely to go negative (Lau and Pomper 2001) and use fear appeals (Ridout and Searles 2011). Unfortunately, no existing dataset provides information about the left-right positioning of parties and candidates worldwide – at least, no dataset exists that covers the full scope of our data. Measures as the ones in the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES; Polk et al. 2017),[7] in the study by Benoit and Laver (2007, henceforth B&L),[8] or in the Manifesto Project Dataset (MPD; Volkens et al. 2016)[9] cover only subsets of countries, and are therefore not tailored for our large-scale comparative purpose. We thus relied on information provided by the Wikipedia pages for each political party, based on the affiliation of the competing candidates. Although not ideal, due to its open source nature, information diffused through this channel has been shown to

provide quality factual information it comes to electoral results and party competition (Brown 2011; Cuzán 2015). Based on the existing information, we created a scale ranging from 1 "far left" to 7 "far right." We verified the external validity of our variable by comparing it with other existing measures; the picture that emerges is one of good external validity, as our measure correlates strongly with the other variables ($R=0.88^{***}$ with the CHES measure, $R=0.87^{***}$ with the B&L measure, and $R=0.64^{***}$ with the MPD measure;[10] more information available upon request). The left-right variable is then folded on itself to create the "extremism" variable, which takes the value 0 for low extremism (this includes candidates from center-left to center-right), 1 for moderate extremism (left and right candidates), and 2 for high extremism (far left and far right candidates). We measure competitive standings via the candidate's success, as the absolute percentage of votes a candidate received in the election. We also control for the candidate gender, which has been shown in the past to affect the use of negative rhetoric due to social desirability biases (e.g., the fact that female candidates tend to go less negative because attack politics is at odds with social stereotypes that see their behavior as passive, kind, and sympathetic; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Fridkin, Kenney, and Woodall 2009).

At the contextual level, we control for both the electoral and party system. We use a binary variable that sorts countries with a Proportional Representation (PR) electoral system (including Mixed Member Proportional) from countries with a plurality/majority system (including Mixed Member Majoritarian; Gallagher 2014). We use the formula proposed by Laakso and Taagepera (1979) for the effective number of parties to measure the total (effective) number of candidates; this measure takes into account the differences in candidates support and yields a number to be interpreted as the number of competing candidates with a similar strength (Lijphart 1999). Our models also control for two elements of the race: competitiveness, and "conflict" media framing. To measure *competitiveness* of the election we rely on a question in the expert survey that asked experts to evaluate how much they agree that "the race was not competitive, the winner was clearly known beforehand;" we recoded the aggregated scores into a variable that varies between 0 "very low competitiveness" and 4 "very high competitiveness." We measure the presence of a "conflict frame" in the media coverage through three questions in the survey; these questions asked experts to evaluate how much attention (from 0 "no attention" to 4 "a great deal of attention") the media as a whole provided to "attacks and negative campaigning between parties, candidates" (negativity; Esser et al. 2017), "individual candidates, their characters and motivations" (personalization; Van Zoonen and Holtz-Bacha 2000), and "the sensational aspects of events and stories" (infotainment; Albaek et al. 2014). The additive scale based on the aggregate expert answers to the

TABLE 1 Descriptive Statistics (Missing Values Excluded)

Level	Variable	N	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Candidates	**Campaign tone	191	4.04	1.54	1.00	7.00
	**Character attacks	193	2.80	0.66	1.48	4.43
	**Fear-arousing messages	193	5.02	1.90	0.50	9.77
	**Enthusiasm-arousing messages	193	4.43	1.64	0.33	9.00
	(**)Uplifting-loathing communication style	191	0.00	1.60	−3.88	3.87
	Populism	195	0.18	0.38	0.00	1.00
	Appeals to the people	93	2.15	0.87	0.25	4.00
	Anti-elites rhetoric	94	1.81	1.13	0.00	4.00
	Incumbent	195	0.16	0.37	0.00	1.00
	Success	195	17.48	17.21	0.12	88.61
	Extremism	195	0.47	0.65	0.00	2.00
	Left-right	195	4.15	1.57	1.00	7.00
	Female	195	0.15	0.36	0.00	1.00
Elections	Electoral system: PR	40	0.48	0.51	0.00	1.00
	Effective number of candidates	40	4.06	2.27	1.27	12.71
	Election competitiveness	40	2.19	1.02	0.00	3.74
	Conflict media frame	40	0.71	0.13	0.24	0.91
	Presidential election	40	1.35	0.48	1.00	2.00
	Civil rights[a]	40	42.43	14.87	3.00	59.00
	OECD	40	0.30	0.46	0.00	1.00

**Dependent variable.
(**)Underlying dimension of communication style.
[a]Source: Freedom House.

three questions has high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .80[11]). Models are, finally, controlled by a binary variable that sorts OECD from non-OECD countries, and the country rating on Freedom House's "Civil Rights" scale (Kenny 2016). Descriptive statistics for all variables and covariates are presented in Table 1.

Identifying Populist Candidates

To the best of our knowledge, no comprehensive repertoire exists that lists populist parties or candidates worldwide – or, to the least, no repertoire that covers all actors in our database. To create a measure, we assessed whether or not each candidate in our dataset was referred to or classified as "populist" in relevant published research. We relied on the few existing comparative work (Mudde 2007; Inglehart and Norris 2016), systematic collections of case-studies (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008; Aalberg et al. 2017), and additional single case-studies for selected countries (Gurov and Zankina 2013; Bos and Brants 2014; Džankić and Keil 2017) that rely on similar definitions of "populism" as an ideology that advocates for people-centrism and anti-elitism (Mudde 2004) or more generally an opposition between the common "people" and the (corrupt, wicked) elites. Some of the work collected refers to populism in general (Rooduijn and Pauwels

2011; Aalberg et al. 2017), whereas other focuses on particular types such as right-wing populism (Mudde 2007; Ennser 2012; Wodak, KhosraviNik, and Mral 2013). This quasi-archival effort allowed us to identify 32 candidates (18% of all candidates in the database) that can be qualified as "populists." In the majority of cases multiple independent scientific references per candidate were identified.[12] The list of all populist candidates, including the references used to establish the classification, is presented in Supplementary Appendix B.

Our dataset contains two variables that allow us to test for the external validity of the populism measure described above. For each election, we asked experts to evaluate whether or not candidates might rely on communication that (i) identifies with the common people and celebrates their authenticity and (ii) uses an anti-establishment and anti-elite rhetoric (answers range between 0 "disagree strongly" and 4 "agree strongly").[13] These two dimensions reflect the core definition of populism adopted in this article as an ideology that advocates for people-centrism and anti-elitism (Mudde 2004; Rooduijn and Pauwels 2011). Unfortunately, the dataset only has these variables for a selected subsample of candidates (usually, the 2–3 most important candidates in each election; $N = 94$, see full list in Supplementary Appendix A); nonetheless, comparing the score that candidates receive on those two variables for populists and non-populists (according to our classification) provides relevant external evidence to assess the validity of the classification itself. Table A2 in the Supplementary Appendix shows that candidates we qualify as "populist" are significantly more likely to score high on those two dimensions of communication, even controlling for all covariates described in the previous sub-section. The 2014 wave of the CHES (Polk et al. 2017) also contains a measure of "salience of anti-establishment and anti-elite rhetoric" for each party (from 0 "Not important at all" to 10 "Extremely important"). This measure exists for 54 observations in our database (see Supplementary Appendix B). The last model in Table A2 (M3) shows that populist candidates are comparatively more likely to score high on this dimension as well.

RESULTS

We discuss the results of a set of analyses, one set for each of the four dependent variables of campaign tone (positive/negative), character attacks (vs. policy attacks), fear-, and enthusiasm-arousing messages. For each dimension of communication style, we first test for the direct effect of candidate characteristics, including populism. In a second stage, we test whether populist candidates are more or less likely to adapt their communication style as a function of their profile or the

characteristics of the context; we do so by interacting the populism variable with all covariates.

Populism and Negative Campaigning

Models presented in Table 2 confirm some trends discussed in the negative campaigning literature. Incumbents are less likely to go negative (Lau and Pomper 2004; Walter and Nai 2015), whereas more extreme candidates and candidates on the right-hand end of the ideological spectrum are more likely to attack (Lau and Pomper 2001; Elmelund-Praestekaer 2010; Walter, van der Brug, and van Praag 2014). Two characteristics of the context also seem to matter: campaigns are more positive and attacks are more policy-based during competitive elections (Francia and Herrnson 2007), whereas the opposite is true when media cover elections through a "conflict" frame that puts a special emphasis on conflicts between candidates, personalization, and infotainment – what Moffitt (2016: 77) calls "dramatization, polarisation, and prioritisation of conflict."

More important for our purpose, Table 2 confirms that populist candidates are more likely to go negative on their rivals; controlling for both their profile and the characteristics of the context, populist candidates are significantly more likely to adopt a negative campaign than non-populist candidates. This effect is unequivocal, and virtually of the same magnitude as the one for incumbents (although with the opposed direction). The fact that challengers are more likely to run negative campaigns than incumbents is one of the clearest results in the negative campaigning literature (Lau and Pomper 2004; Walter and Nai 2015). Incumbents, based on their past experience while in the office, usually are able to promote themselves, their record and accomplishments – their experience in the office should, in this sense, provide them with material through which to build positive self-promoting campaigns. Challengers usually do not have this option and do not have an office to lose, and are thus more likely to take risks and to run negative campaigns. The incumbency status of candidates further interacts with populism to foster negativity – the only case in which populism interacts with the profile of candidates of characteristics of the context to explain negativity: if among challengers populists are more likely to go negative than non-populists, the difference between the two is especially important for incumbents. Even more, incumbent populists are, comparatively, the category more likely to go negative; the difference between populist and non-populist incumbents is substantial, almost 2.5 points on a 1–7 scale of campaign tone, and shows a "switch" from a positive to a `negative tone (the cutoff being 4 "equally positive and negative campaign"). In a nutshell, incumbents go positive, except when they are populists. To be sure, incumbent populists are sort of an oddity, as populists are usually expected to be succeed in

TABLE 2 Populism and Negative Campaigning

| | Campaign tone[a] | | | | | | Character attacks[b] | | | | | |
| | M1 | | | M2 | | | M3 | | | M4 | | |
	Coef	Sig	Se	Coef	Sig	Se	Coef	Sig	Se	Coef	Sig	Se
Populist candidate	0.91	**	(0.29)	0.15		(2.06)	0.42	***	(0.11)	−0.45		(0.79)
Incumbent	−0.92	**	(0.32)	−1.28	***	(0.37)	−0.20	†	(0.12)	−0.31	*	(0.14)
Success	0.01		(0.01)	0.01		(0.01)	0.00		(0.00)	0.00		(0.00)
Extremism	0.58	***	(0.16)	0.65	**	(0.20)	0.12	†	(0.06)	0.12		(0.08)
Left-right	0.15	*	(0.06)	0.19	*	(0.08)	0.09	***	(0.02)	0.07	*	(0.03)
Female	0.24		(0.28)	0.07		(0.31)	0.20	†	(0.11)	0.15		(0.12)
Electoral system: PR	−0.08		(0.22)	−0.21		(0.23)	0.08		(0.12)	0.01		(0.10)
EN candidates	−0.07		(0.05)	−0.05		(0.05)	−0.01		(0.03)	−0.01		(0.02)
Election competitiveness	−0.26	†	(0.14)	−0.25	†	(0.14)	−0.22	**	(0.07)	−0.21	***	(0.06)
Conflict media frame	3.21	**	(1.14)	2.88	*	(1.12)	2.09	***	(0.60)	1.91	***	(0.52)
Presidential election	−0.16		(0.27)	−0.21		(0.28)	−0.03		(0.14)	−0.05		(0.13)
Civil rights	−0.00		(0.01)	−0.01		(0.01)	0.01		(0.01)	0.01		(0.01)
OECD	−0.16		(0.31)	−0.09		(0.32)	−0.34	*	(0.16)	−0.36	*	(0.15)
Populist * Incumbent				1.98	*	(0.99)				0.47		(0.38)
Populist * Success				−0.03		(0.02)				0.00		(0.01)
Populist * Extremism				0.22		(0.46)				0.01		(0.18)
Populist * Left-right				−0.15		(0.15)				0.09		(0.06)
Populist * Female				0.46		(0.86)				0.13		(0.33)
Populist * PR				0.47		(0.60)				0.33		(0.23)
Populist * EN candidates				−0.22		(0.22)				0.02		(0.08)
Populist * Compet				0.02		(0.34)				−0.03		(0.13)
Populist * Conflict frame				1.13		(3.41)				1.80		(1.32)
Populist * Pre elect				−0.17		(0.81)				−0.22		(0.31)
Populist * Civil rights				0.03		(0.04)				−0.02		(0.02)
Populist * OECD				−0.18		(0.77)				0.31		(0.30)
Intercept	2.15	**	(0.82)	2.41	**	(0.90)	1.22	**	(0.40)	1.41	***	(0.38)
N(candidates)	191			191			193			193		
N(elections)	40			40			40			40		
R^2	0.31			0.34			0.39			0.44		

Note: All models are random-effect hierarchical linear regressions (HLM) where candidates are nested within elections. Models run only on candidates evaluated by five experts or more.

[a]Dependent variable is the tone of the candidates campaign (non-parametric-adjusted measure), and varies between 1 "very positive" and 7 "very negative."

[b]Dependent variable is the type of attacks mostly used by the candidate, and varies between 1 "exclusively policy attacks" and 5 "exclusively character attacks."

$***p < 0.001$, $**p < 0.01$, $*p < 0.05$, $†p < 0.1$.

opposition but fail in government (Heinisch 2003; but see Mudde 2013; Albertazzi and McDonnell 2015). "Populists in power" face an identity crisis because torn between, on the one side, maintaining their antagonistic and oppositional stance and, on the other hand, moderating their most outrageous claims and play the game with the other institutional and "mainstream" actors; both alternatives seem irreconcilable, and both come with a high risk of alienating part of the electorate (McDonnell and Newell 2011; Albertazzi and McDonnell 2015). Regardless of their performance while in office, our results seem to point toward the fact that, when running for re-elections, "populists will be populists;" not even an incumbency status, one of the most powerful drivers of positive campaigns, is able to alter their proclivity for aggressive and offensive rhetoric.

Populism and Emotional Campaigns

Turning to the use of emotional appeals in electoral campaigns (Table 3), our results show an interesting contrast between the use of appeals intended to stir fear and appeals intended to stir enthusiasm. Ceteris paribus, incumbents are less likely to rely on fear appeals but more likely to run enthusiasm campaigns, perhaps for the same reasons that set incentives for them to rely on positive messages and avoid excessive attacks against rivals. This confirms the results found in Brader (2006), who shows that fear appeals are the preferred choice of challengers, and enthusiasm appeals the choice of incumbents; these latter "enjoy the advantage at reelection time of being the default choice [… and they should thus] reinforce the status quo by appealing to enthusiasm" (2006: 165). Unsurprisingly, candidates ideologically far from the center are more likely to rely on fear-arousing messages and less likely to use enthusiasm-based campaigns, and so are candidates on the right-end side of the political spectrum, partially confirming what discussed in Ridout and Searles (2011).

Most importantly, Table 3 shows that populists tend to run campaigns based on fear-arousing messages. By definition turned toward the promotion of the "people" against evil elites, it is not surprising that populists are keen to rely on messages that fuel anxiety over real or symbolic threats, such as the loss of identity or economic prosperity (Heinisch 2003; Mols and Jetten 2016; Matthes and Schmuck 2017). Populist candidates, furthermore, tend to rely even more heavily on fear-arousing messages under a specific set of circumstances: when the media cover political events through a "conflict frame." Figure 1 substantiates the interaction between populism and conflict media frame through marginal effects. The interplay between media framing and emotional campaigns of populists appears clearly in the figure. Conflict framing provides incentives for all candidates to run fear campaigns, but populist seems to take a particular advantage of this

TABLE 3 Populism and Emotional Campaigns

| | Fear-arousing messages[a] | | | | | | Enthusiasm-arousing messages[b] | | | | | |
| | M1 | | | M2 | | | M3 | | | M4 | | |
	Coef	Sig	Se	Coef	Sig	Se	Coef	Sig	Se	Coef	Sig	Se
Populist candidate	0.86	**	(0.33)	−4.07	†	(2.30)	−0.30		(0.25)	2.73		(1.75)
Incumbent	−1.29	***	(0.37)	−1.46	***	(0.40)	1.21	***	(0.27)	1.51	***	(0.30)
Success	0.04	***	(0.01)	0.04	***	(0.01)	0.03	***	(0.01)	0.03	***	(0.01)
Extremism	0.65	***	(0.19)	0.67	**	(0.22)	−0.63	***	(0.14)	−0.60	***	(0.17)
Left-right	0.29	***	(0.07)	0.25	**	(0.09)	−0.16	**	(0.05)	−0.10		(0.07)
Female	0.26		(0.32)	0.19		(0.35)	−0.27		(0.24)	−0.07		(0.26)
Electoral system: PR	−0.07		(0.26)	−0.19		(0.31)	0.43		(0.33)	0.53		(0.32)
EN candidates	0.05		(0.06)	0.04		(0.07)	0.05		(0.08)	0.05		(0.07)
Election competitiveness	−0.36	*	(0.16)	−0.41	*	(0.19)	0.19		(0.20)	0.24		(0.20)
Conflict media frame	5.58	***	(1.35)	4.57	**	(1.57)	−2.11		(1.71)	−1.98		(1.63)
Presidential election	−0.72	*	(0.32)	−0.68	†	(0.38)	0.48		(0.39)	0.66	†	(0.38)
Civil rights	0.01		(0.01)	0.02		(0.02)	0.02		(0.02)	0.03		(0.02)
OECD	−0.43		(0.37)	−0.64		(0.44)	−0.33		(0.47)	−0.36		(0.45)
Populist * Incumbent				1.01		(1.11)				−2.01	*	(0.84)
Populist * Success				−0.01		(0.03)				0.03		(0.02)
Populist * Extremism				0.18		(0.51)				−0.38		(0.38)
Populist * Left-right				0.15		(0.17)				−0.09		(0.13)
Populist * Female				0.39		(0.98)				−1.06		(0.74)
Populist * PR				1.18	†	(0.68)				−0.48		(0.51)
Populist * EN candidates				0.27		(0.25)				0.16		(0.19)
Populist * Compet				0.22		(0.38)				−0.37		(0.29)
Populist * Conflict frame				9.20	*	(3.86)				0.50		(2.94)
Populist * Pre elect				−0.81		(0.90)				−0.55		(0.68)
Populist * Civil rights				−0.09	†	(0.05)				−0.04		(0.04)
Populist * OECD				1.22		(0.87)				0.13		(0.65)
Intercept	0.11		(0.94)	0.90		(1.13)	3.86	***	(1.10)	2.86	**	(1.10)
N(candidates)	193			193			193			193		
N(elections)	40			40			40			40		
R^2	0.39			0.43			0.42			0.48		

Note: All models are random-effect HLM where candidates are nested within elections. Models run only on candidates evaluated by five experts or more.

[a]Dependent variable is the use of fear-arousing messages, and varies between 0 "very little" and 10 "very much."

[b]Dependent variable is the use of enthusiasm-arousing messages, and varies between 0 "very little" and 10 "very much."

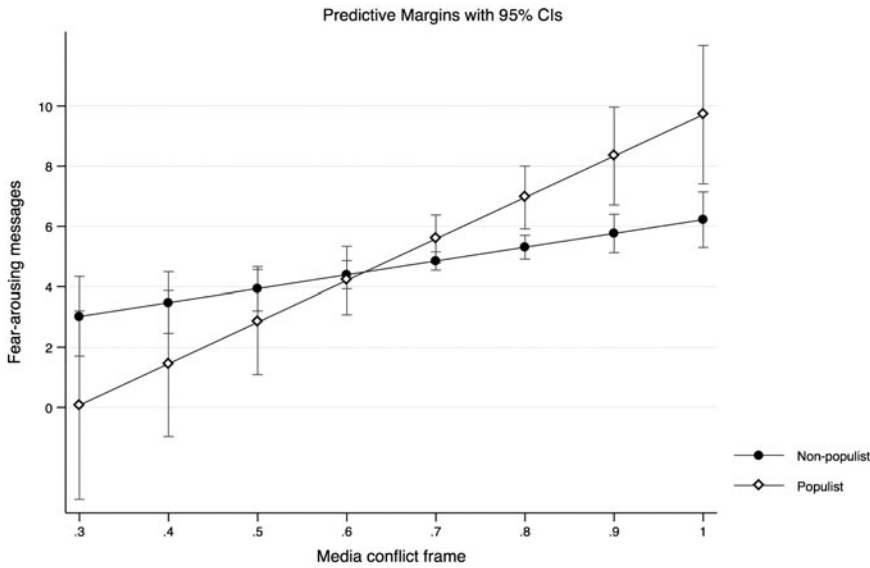*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$.

FIGURE 1 Fear-arousing messages, by populism * media conflict frame (marginal effects). *Note:* Marginal effects with 95% CIs, based on coefficients in Table 3. The use of fear-arousing messages varies between 0 "very little" and 10 "very much"; media conflict frame varies between 0 "very low" and 10 "very high."

important context feature; high conflict framing and fear campaigning go hand in hand, and when conflict framing is low populist tend even to rely less than non-populists on fear appeals – paraphrasing a popular saying, populists know the mud they roll in.

Populists, however, are not more (or less) likely to rely on enthusiasm-arousing campaigns – the difference between populists and non-populists is quite negligible, and far from statistically significant – with one exception: when the incumbency status of candidates is also taken into account. Incumbents are *less* likely to rely on enthusiasm-infused campaigns (although significantly more likely to do so overall) when they are qualified as populists. This result goes hand in hand with the interactive effect between incumbency status and populist on campaign tone discussed beforehand: there is consistent evidence that incumbents tend to run positive campaigns, as not only they have the incentives (and the material) to do so, but also have too much to lose in adopting risky campaign strategies. When looking at the general effects, our models confirm this trend: incumbents are less likely to go negative on their rivals, less likely to use character attacks (the type of attacks more likely to backfire), less likely to run fear campaigns but more likely to use enthusiasm-inducing messages. Things change however when the populist (or not) nature of candidates is taken into account. In this set of circumstances, populist incumbents alter

TABLE 4 Populism and Uplifting-loathing Rhetoric

	Communication style[a]					
	M1			*M2*		
	Coef	Sig	Se	Coef	Sig	Se
Populist candidate	0.95	***	(0.28)	−2.03		(1.95)
Incumbent	−1.15	***	(0.31)	−1.49	***	(0.34)
Success	0.01		(0.01)	0.01		(0.01)
Extremism	0.60	***	(0.16)	0.62	***	(0.19)
Left-right	0.24	***	(0.06)	0.21	**	(0.07)
Female	0.37		(0.27)	0.20		(0.29)
Electoral system: PR	−0.12		(0.21)	−0.26		(0.23)
EN candidates	−0.03		(0.05)	−0.02		(0.05)
Election competitiveness	−0.41	**	(0.13)	−0.43	**	(0.14)
Conflict media frame	4.91	***	(1.06)	4.24	***	(1.12)
Presidential election	−0.43	†	(0.26)	−0.45		(0.28)
Civil rights	−0.00		(0.01)	−0.00		(0.01)
OECD	−0.38		(0.29)	−0.42		(0.32)
Populist * Incumbent				1.87	*	(0.94)
Populist * Success				−0.02		(0.02)
Populist * Extremism				0.28		(0.43)
Populist * Left-right				0.08		(0.14)
Populist * Female				0.66		(0.81)
Populist * PR				0.85		(0.57)
Populist * EN candidates				−0.05		(0.20)
Populist * Compet				0.17		(0.32)
Populist * Conflict frame				4.55		(3.22)
Populist * Pre elect				−0.52		(0.76)
Populist * Civil rights				−0.02		(0.04)
Populist * OECD				0.52		(0.73)
Intercept	−3.12	***	(0.77)	−2.40	**	(0.88)
N(candidates)	191			191		
N(elections)	40			40		
R^2	0.41			0.46		

Note: All models are random-effect HLM where candidates are nested within elections. Models run only on candidates evaluated by five experts or more.

[a]Dependent variable is the candidate rhetoric (underlying dimensions of four communication components), and varies between −3.88 (fully positive, uplifting campaign) to 3.87 (fully aggressive, loathing-loaded campaign).

***$p < 0.001$, **$p < 0.01$, *$p < 0.05$, †$p < 0.1$.

their behavior and run more negative and less enthusiasm-infused campaigns than their non-populist counterparts (or challengers, for that matters).

Loathing vs. Uplifting Rhetoric

Given the interconnectedness of the four dimensions of campaigning style, we briefly present results of a model that replicates the analyses discussed

above but ran this time on the underlying dimension of "uplifting-loathing" rhetoric. The dependent variable takes positive values for a rhetoric based on negative tone, character attacks, and fear appeals ("loathing") and negative values for a rhetoric based on enthusiasm appeals and positivity ("uplifting campaign"). Results in Table 4 confirm the major trend discussed above: ceteris paribus, populists are significantly and substantially more likely to run a campaign based on negativity, character attacks, and fear appeals. The results also highlight again the interesting interaction between populism and incumbency status; incumbents are less likely to run "loathing" campaigns overall, except when they are populists. Regardless of whether they fail or succeed when in government (Heinisch 2003), this result suggests that when acceding power populists do not moderate their rhetoric – quite the opposite in fact. Finally, it is worth mentioning a result that is interesting due to a lack of significance: right-wing and left-wing populists, according to all of our models, do not communicate differently in any significant or meaningful way. Right-wing candidates are more likely to go negative and use fear appeals than left-wing candidates, but this difference ceases to exist once the populist nature of candidates is taken into account. This result supports the idea that, although the intrinsic difference between the different forms of populism should not be ignored or downplayed, all populists might quite well share similar communication strategies (Aalberg and De Vreese 2017).

Robustness Checks

We ran several sets of robustness tests (Supplementary Appendix E). Results discussed above are overall robust, and resist when using a more restrictive measure of populism (minimum two independent references identified for each candidate), for alternative measures of campaign tone (unadjusted and parametric-adjusted measures of campaign tone) and for alternative measures of some main covariates (left-right, extremism). Furthermore, results are stable also when controlling for additional covariates (geographical region of the country). Finally, in what is perhaps the most important set of controls, all models yield virtually identical results also when controlled by the profile of experts (election averages on several expert profile variables).

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Whether oppositional forces (Heinisch 2003) or participating to the establishment game (Mudde 2013; Albertazzi and McDonnell 2015), populists are part of the contemporary political landscape – and central in the

narrative about the crisis of democracy (Norris and Inglehart 2018). Widespread is also the image of populist candidates as unpleasant, agitated, provocateurs, offensive, aggressive, and bad-mannered political animals (Arditi 2007; Moffitt 2016; Oliver and Rahn 2016). But does this intuition resist the test of systematic empirical evidence? Only scattered research tested for the communication style of populist candidates, and tried to establish whether or not populists communicate in a different way than non-populist "mainstream" politicians (Stanyer, Salgado, and Strömbäck 2017). Even more, virtually no systematic evidence about the communication style and rhetoric of populists exists in a broader and comparative perspective.

To fill this gap, we tested whether populists and non-populists competing in elections worldwide differ in their rhetoric, with a special attention to the tone of their campaign and their use of emotional appeals. We introduced a new expert survey dataset that contains information for 195 candidates having competed in 40 elections over one year. With this new data, and even controlling for several "usual suspects" that have been shown to drive negative and emotional campaigns (incumbency status, ideology, success, and gender or candidates, but also the nature of the electoral system and party competition; Walter and Nai 2015), our results highlight that populist communicate through campaigns that are 15% more negative, and contain 11% more character attacks and 8% more fear messages than campaigns of non-populist "mainstream" candidates.[14] Although our dataset contains information for virtually all elections that happened in the timeframe, we should proceed with caution and not assume that those elections are necessarily representative of all electoral contests worldwide. Nonetheless, the breadth and diversity of elections included here suggests that our results are likely to matter even beyond the countries covered in our analyses.

Our results face several limitations. First, because the data we rely upon provide a snapshot of negativity during the whole campaign, we were unable to discuss temporal campaign dynamics, for instance, the fact that negative messages are more likely to be used at the very end of the campaign (Haynes and Rhine 1998; Damore 2002; Freedman and Goldstein 2002; Ridout and Holland 2010). Second, we were unable to assess the differential use of campaign strategies across different channels, as our measure is (voluntarily) broad and not related to a specific medium or channel. Third, we understand that expert evaluations are sometimes met with skepticism; we hope however to have provided enough evidence and discussions able to convince that this alternative approach has considerable merits for large-scale comparative research on negative and emotional campaigning.

Beyond these limitations, our results are a first, important step toward a better understanding of the rhetoric strategies of populists – which

received in the past surprisingly little attention (Stanyer, Salgado, and Strömbäck 2017) – beyond the rather intuitive image of impolite and bad-mannered communicators that seem so widespread.

More broadly, these results contribute to the idea that the communication and rhetoric styles of candidates competing in elections matter for their "personality" reputation or "public persona," that is, the way candidates present themselves to the world through their deeds and manners (Rubenzer, Faschingbauer, and Ones 2000; Lilienfeld et al. 2012; Watts et al. 2013; Nai and Maier 2018). Even in parliamentary contests, the place of candidates increasingly takes center stage. Candidates' orientations and record now seem to prime over issue orientations and even partisanship, as politics gets increasingly "personalized" (Swanson and Mancini 1996; Van Zoonen and Holtz-Bacha 2000). Candidates' characteristics beyond their political profile strongly participate to define their image (Anderson and Brettschneider 2003), and increasing evidence suggests that personality goes a long way (Bittner 2011; Costa Lobo 2018).

Our results are, furthermore, particularly relevant for *comparative* research on populism and populist communication, and directly speak to the existing literature on the causes of negative and emotional campaigns (Skaperdas and Grofman 1995; Lau and Pomper 2004; Brader 2006; Ridout and Searles 2011), confirming in a large-scale comparative setting some well-known trends (e.g., the fact that incumbents are more likely to go positive or that candidates far from the ideological center tend to go negative). Our results also suggest that another important variable has to be taken into account: the populist nature of competing candidates. Not only it matters for the use of negative and emotional campaigns, but also the populist nature of candidates has even the power to alter the importance of other main traits of the candidates' profile: for instance, our results show that incumbents go positive and tend to use uplifting messages, except when they are populists.

Finally, results discussed results can inform us about the electoral *success* of populists, and beyond. Under specific conditions, negative messages have the power to reduce support for the target; reverse effects have also been shown (especially for character attacks, Carraro and Castelli 2010), but the potential of reshuffling the cards on the table and alter electoral outcomes is very real for negative campaign, either in favor of the attacker or the target (Lau, Sigelman, and Rovner 2007; Fridkin and Kenney 2012). Beyond electoral outcomes, negative and fear-fuelled campaigns have also been seen as detrimental forces in modern democracies, fostering depressed turnout, cynicism, apathy, and a gloomier public mood (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995; Thorson et al. 2000; Yoon, Pinkleton, and Ko 2005; Nai and Seeberg 2018). Other scholars point to opposite effects, and show that negativity can act as a cue to pay attention and get involved in the political game; this has the potential to foster interest and,

ultimately, increases turnout and mobilization (Martin 2004; Geer 2006). Whether in a beneficial or detrimental way, negativity is likely to play a role in modern democracies, and so do emotional campaigns (Jerit 2004; Brader 2006; Ridout and Searles 2011). With this in mind knowing whether, and under which conditions, populists are more likely to rely on those rhetorical tools seems an important step toward a more complete understanding of populism and its much-feared grip on modern democracies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES

1. https://www.alessandro-nai.com/negative-campaigning-comparative-data.

2. We define an "expert" as a scholar with expertise in electoral politics, political communication (including political journalism), and/or electoral behavior, or related disciplines, for the country where the election was held. "Expertise" is established by the presence of one of the following criteria: (1) existing relevant academic publications (including conference papers); (2) holding a chair in those disciplines in a department within the country; (3) membership of a relevant research group, professional network, or organized section of such a group; (4) explicit self-assessed expertise in professional webpage (e.g., bio in university webpage).

3. Supplementary Appendix C reports a series of analyses that assess the extent of potential biases due to the expert profile.

4. The models estimated the adjusted measure of campaign negativity simultaneously via the values assigned to all vignettes and five set parameters: the unique election identifier to control the fact that experts are clustered within different elections, and four at the expert level: gender, domestic/international, self-reported familiarity with the election, and left-right positioning. The adjusted variable is a continuous measure of campaign negativity that ranges between 1 "very positive" and 7 "very negative."

5. For fear, e.g., "More children are victim of crime than ever before," "The average temperature of the planed is increasing rapidly, we have to stop climate change before it's too late." For enthusiasm, e.g., "Children are better protected from crime than ever before," "The future looks bright for a generation of young people."

6. The loading scores for the four original variables on the underlying dimension are as follows: tone = 0.55, character attacks = 0.51, fear = 0.54, enthusiasm = −0.39. The original PCA-extracted

variable ranges from −3.88 (fully positive, uplifting campaign) to 3.87 (fully aggressive, loathing-loaded campaign). Full PCA results available upon request.

7. Information and dataset (1999–2014) available at: http://chesdata.eu

8. Information and dataset (2006) available at: http://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/ppmd/

9. Information and dataset (2016) available at: https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu

10. The Manifesto Party Dataset (MPD) measure itself correlates more weakly with the other two measures (CHES and B&L), which are strongly correlated with each other.

11. Furthermore, the scale is extremely correlated ($R = 0.999$***) with the first and only underlying dimension extracted through PCA (Eigenvalue $= 2.14$; 71% of explained variance), which confirms the unidimensionality of the scale.

12. We discuss below a series of robustness tests based on a more restrictive classification that excludes candidates for which only one scientific reference was found; the direct effects of populism are consistent with those obtained when using the original classification (and, in some case, stronger); indirect effects (and especially the interaction with incumbency status) are weaker, perhaps due to the lower number of populists overall when using this most restrictive measure ($N = 23$).

13. The wording of those two items is similar to the one suggested by Wiesehomeier (2016).

14. Marginal effects from coefficients in Tables 2 and 3.

FUNDING

ORCID

Alessandro Nai http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7303-2693

REFERENCES

Aalberg, T., and C. H. De Vreese. 2017. "Introduction. Comprehending Populist Political Communication." In *Populist Political Communication in Europe*, edited by T. Aalberg, F. Esser, C. Reinemann, J. Strömbäck, and C. H. de Vreese, 3–11. New York, NY: Routledge.

Aalberg, T., F. Esser, C. Reinemann, J. Strömbäck, and C. H. de Vreese. 2017. *Populist Political Communication in Europe*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Abts, K., and S. Rummens. 2007. "Populism versus Democracy." *Political Studies* 55 (2):405–24.

Albaek, E., A. Van Dalen, N. Jebril, and C. H. de Vreese. 2014. *Political Journalism in Comparative Perspective*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Albertazzi, D., and D. McDonnell. 2015. *Populists in Power*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Albertazzi, D., and D. McDonnell. (Eds.). 2008. *Twenty-First Century Populism. The Spectre of Western European Democracy*. Houndmills: Palgrave.

Anderson, C. J., and F. Brettschneider. 2003. "The Likable Winner Versus the Competent Loser: Candidate Images and the German Election of 2002." *German Politics and Society* 21 (1):95–118.

Ansolabehere, S., and S. Iyengar. 1995. *Going Negative: How Attack Ads Shrink and Polarize The Electorate*, New York: Free Press.

Arditi, B. 2007. *Politics on the Edges of Liberalism: Difference, Populism, Revolution, Agitation*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Bakker, B. N., M. Rooduijn, and G. Schumacher. 2016. "The Psychological Roots of Populist Voting: Evidence from the United States, the Netherlands and Germany." *European Journal of Political Research* 55 (2):302–20.

Bakker, R., E. Edwards, S. Jolly, J. Polk, J. Rovny, and M. Steenbergen. 2014. "Anchoring the Experts: Using Vignettes to Compare Party Ideology across Countries." *Research & Politics* 1 (3):1–8.

Benoit, K., and M. Laver. 2007. "Estimating Party Policy Positions: Comparing Expert Surveys and Hand-Coded Content Analysis." *Electoral Studies* 26(1): 90–107.

Benoit, W. L., and M. J. Glantz. 2017. *Persuasive Attacks on Donald Trump in the 2016 Presidential Primary*. Lanham: Lexington Books.

Bettencourt, B., K. Charlton, N. Dorr, and D. L. Hume. 2001. "Status Differences and in-Group Bias: A Meta-Analytic Examination of the Effects of Status Stability, Status Legitimacy, and Group Permeability." *Psychological Bulletin* 127 (4):520–42.

Bittner, A. 2011. *Platform or Personality? The Role of Party Leaders in Elections*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bos, L., and K. Brants. 2014. "Populist Rhetoric in Politics and Media: A Longitudinal Study of the Netherlands." *European Journal of Communication* 29 (6):703–19.

Brader, T. 2006. *Campaigning for Hearts and Minds: How Emotional Appeals in Political Ads Work*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Brader, T., N. A. Valentino, and E. Suhay. 2008. "What Triggers Public Opposition to Immigration? Anxiety, Group Cues, and Immigration Threat." *American Journal of Political Science* 52 (4):959–78.

Brooks, D. J., and J. G. Geer. 2007. "Beyond Negativity: The Effects of Incivility on the Electorate." *American Journal of Political Science* 51 (1):1–16.

Brown, A. R. 2011. "Wikipedia as a Data Source for Political Scientists: Accuracy and Completeness of Coverage." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44 (2):339–43.

Budesheim, T. L., D. A. Houston, and S. J. DePaola. 1996. "Persuasiveness of in-Group and out-Group Political Messages: The Case of Negative Political Campaigning." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 70 (3):523.

Carraro, L., and L. Castelli. 2010. "The Implicit and Explicit Effects of Negative Political Campaigns: Is the Source Really Blamed?" *Political Psychology* 31 (4): 617–45.

Carraro, L., B. Gawronski, and L. Castelli. 2010. "Losing on All Fronts: The Effects of Negative versus Positive Person-Based Campaigns on Implicit and Explicit Evaluations of Political Candidates." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 49 (3): 453–70.

Chevigny, P. 2003. "The Populism of Fear: Politics of Crime in the Americas." *Punishment & Society* 5 (1):77–96.

Costa Lobo, M. 2018. "Personality Goes a Long Way." *Government and Opposition* 53 (1):159–79.

Cranmer, M. 2015. "The Effects of Populist Emotive Appeals within Direct-Democratic Campaigning." *Journal of Political Marketing* 14 (3):284–309.

Crigler, A., M. Just, and T. Belt. 2006. "The Three Faces of Negative Campaigning: The Democratic Implications of Attack Ads, Cynical News, and Fear-Arousing Messages." In *Feeling Politics. Emotion in Political Information Processing*, edited by D. P. Redlawsk, 135–63. New York, NY: Palgrave.

Curini, L. 2011. "Negative Campaigning in No-Cabinet Alternation Systems: Ideological Closeness and Blames of Corruption in Italy and Japan Using Party Manifesto Data." *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 12 (3):399–420.

Cuzán, A. G. 2015. "Five Laws of Politics." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 48 (3): 415–9.

Damore, D. F. 2002. "Candidate Strategy and the Decision to Go Negative." *Political Research Quarterly* 55 (3):669–85.

Džankić, J., and S. Keil. 2017. "State-Sponsored Populism and the Rise of Populist Governance: The Case of Montenegro." *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 19 (4):403–16.

Eiermann, M. 2016. "How Donald Trump Fits into the History of American Populism." *New Perspectives Quarterly* 33 (2):29–34.

Elmelund-Praestekaer, C. 2010. "Beyond American Negativity: Toward a General Understanding of the Determinants of Negative Campaigning." *European Political Science Review* 2 (1):137–56.

Ennser, L. 2012. "The Homogeneity of West European Party Families: The Radical Right in Comparative Perspective." *Party Politics* 18 (2):151–71.

Esser, F., S. Engesser, J. Matthes, and R. Berganza. 2017. "Negativity." In *Comparing Political Journalism*, edited by C. De Vreese, F. Esser, and D. N. Hopmann, 71–91. New York, NY: Routledge.

Francia, P. L., and P. S. Herrnson. 2007. "Keeping It Professional: The Influence of Political Consultants on Candidate Attitudes toward Negative Campaigning." *Politics & Policy* 35 (2):246–72.

Freedman, P., and K. Goldstein. 2002. "Lessons Learned Campaign Advertising in the 2000 Elections." *Political Communication* 19 (1):5–28.

Fridkin, K. L., and P. J. Kenney. 2011. "Variability in Citizens' Reactions to Different Types of Negative Campaigns." *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (2):307–25.

Fridkin, K. L., and P. J. Kenney. 2012. "The Impact of Negative Campaigning on Citizens' Actions and Attitudes." In *The SAGE Handbook of Political Communication*, edited by H. A. Semetko and M. Scammell, 173–85. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Fridkin, K. L., P. J. Kenney, and G. S. Woodall. 2009. "Bad for Men, Better for Women: The Impact of Stereotypes during Negative Campaigns." *Political Behavior* 31 (1):53–77.

Fridkin, K. L., and P. J. Kenney. 2004. "Do Negative Messages Work? The Impact of Negativity on Citizens' Evaluations of Candidates." *American Politics Research* 32 (5):570–605.

Gale, P. 2004. "The Refugee Crisis and Fear: Populist Politics and Media Discourse." *Journal of Sociology* 40 (4):321–40.

Gallagher, M. 2014. "Electoral Institutions and Representation." In *Comparing Democracies 4*, edited by L. LeDuc, R. Niemi, and P. Norris, 11–31. London: Sage.

Geer, J. 2006. *In Defense of Negativity: Attack Ads in Presidential Campaigns*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Gélineau, F., and A. Blais. 2015. "Comparing Measures of Campaign Negativity: Expert Judgments, Manifestos, Debates, and Advertisements." In *New Perspectives on Negative Campaigning: Why Attack Politics Matters*, edited by A. Nai and A. S. Walter, 63–74. Colchester: ECPR Press.

Gurov, B., and E. Zankina. 2013. "Populism and the Construction of Political Charisma." *Post-Transition Politics in Bulgaria. Problems of Post-Communism* 60 (1):3–17.

Haynes, A. A., and S. L. Rhine. 1998. "Attack Politics in Presidential Nomination Campaigns: An Examination of the Frequency and Determinants of Intermediated Negative Messages against Opponents." *Political Research Quarterly* 51 (3):691–721.

Heinisch, R. 2003. "Success in Opposition–Failure in Government: Explaining the Performance of Right-Wing Populist Parties in Public Office." *West European Politics* 26 (3):91–130.

Huddy, L. 2003. "Group Membership, Ingroup Loyalty, and Political Cohesion." In *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, edited by D. O. Sears, L. Huddy, and R. Jervis, 511–58. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Huddy, L., and N. Terkildsen. 1993. "Stereotypes and the Perception of Male and Female Candidates." *American Journal of Political Science* 37 (1):119–47.

Huddy, L., S. Feldman, C. Taber, and G. Lahav. 2005. "Threat, Anxiety, and Support of Antiterrorism Policies." *American Journal of Political Science* 49 (3):593–608.

Immerzeel, T., and M. Pickup. 2015. "Populist Radical Right Parties Mobilizing 'the People'? The Role of Populist Radical Right Success in Voter Turnout." *Electoral Studies* 40:347–60.

Inglehart, R., and P. Norris. 2016. "Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash." Harvard HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series RWP16-026.

Jagers, J., and S. Walgrave. 2007. "Populism as Political Communication Style: An Empirical Study of Political Parties' Discourse in Belgium." *European Journal of Political Research* 46 (3):319–45.

Jerit, J. 2004. "Survival of the Fittest: Rhetoric during the Course of an Election Campaign." *Political Psychology* 25 (4):563–75.

Kahn, K. F. 1996. *The Political Consequences of Being a Woman*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Kahn, K. F., and P. J. Kenney. 1999. "Do Negative Campaigns Mobilize or Suppress Turnout? Clarifying the Relationship between Negativity and Participation." *American Political Science Review* 93 (4):877–89.

Kazin, M. 2016. "Trump and American Populism: Old Whine, New Bottles." *Foreign Affairs* 95:17–24.

Kienpointner, M. 2008. "Impoliteness and Emotional Arguments." *Journal of Politeness Research* 4 (2):243–65.

King, G., C. J. Murray, J. A. Salomon, and A. Tandon. 2004. "Enhancing the Validity and Cross-Cultural Comparability of Measurement in Survey Research." *American Political Science Review* 98 (1):191–583.

Laakso, M., and R. Taagepera. 1979. "'Effective' Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe." *Comparative Political Studies* 12 (1):3–27.

Lau, R. R., and G. M. Pomper. 2001. "Negative Campaigning by US Senate Candidates." *Party Politics* 7 (1):69–87.

Lau, R. R., and G. M. Pomper. 2004. *Negative Campaigning: An Analysis of U.S. Senate Elections*. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield.

Lau, R. R., L. Sigelman, and I. B. Rovner. 2007. "The Effects of Negative Political Campaigns: A Meta-Analytic Reassessment." *Journal of Politics* 69 (4): 1176–209.

Lijphart, A. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Lilienfeld, S. O., I. D. Waldman, K. Landfield, A. L. Watts, S. Rubenzer, and T. R. Faschingbauer. 2012. "Fearless Dominance and the US Presidency: Implications of Psychopathic Personality Traits for Successful and Unsuccessful Political Leadership." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 103 (3):489–505.

MacMillan, C. 2017. "Welcome to the Carnival? Podemos, Populism and Bakhtin's Carnivalesque." *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 25 (2):258–73.

Maier, J., and C. Jansen. 2015. "When Do Candidates Attack in Election Campaigns? Exploring the Determinants of Negative Candidate Messages in German Televised Debates." *Party Politics* 23 (5):549–559.

Marcus, G. E., and M. B. MacKuen. 1993. "Anxiety, Enthusiasm, and the Vote: The Emotional Underpinnings of Learning and Involvement during Presidential Campaigns." *American Political Science Review* 87 (3):672–85.

Marcus, G. E., R. Neuman, and M. B. MacKuen. 2000. *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgement*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Martin, P. S. 2004. "Inside the Black Box of Negative Campaign Effects: Three Reasons Why Negative Campaigns Mobilize." *Political Psychology* 25 (4): 545–62.

Matthes, J., and D. Schmuck. 2017. "The Effects of Anti-Immigrant Right-Wing Populist Ads on Implicit and Explicit Attitudes: A Moderated Mediation Model." *Communication Research* 44 (4):556–81.

McDonnell, D., and J. L. Newell. 2011. "Outsider Parties in Government in Western Europe." *Party Politics* 17 (4):443–52.

Min, Y. 2004. "News Coverage of Negative Political Campaigns: An Experiment of Negative Campaigns Effects on Turnout and Candidate Preferences." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 9 (4):95–38.

Moffitt, B. 2016. *The Global Rise of Populism: Performance, Political Style, and Representation*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Moffitt, B., and S. Tormey. 2014. "Rethinking Populism: Politics, Mediatisation and Political Style." *Political Studies* 62 (2):381–97.

Mols, F., and J. Jetten. 2016. "Explaining the Appeal of Populist Right-Wing Parties in Times of Economic Prosperity." *Political Psychology* 37 (2):275–92.

Mudde, C. 2004. "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition* 39 (4): 542–63.

Mudde, C. 2007. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Mudde, C. 2010. "The Populist Radical Right: A Pathological Normalcy." *West European Politics* 33 (6):1167–86.

Mudde, C. 2013. "Three Decades of Populist Radical Right Parties in Western Europe: So What?" *European Journal of Political Research* 52 (1):1–19.

Mudde, C., and C. Rovira Kaltwasser. 2013. "Populism." In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, edited by M. Freeden, L. T. Sargent, and M. Stears, 493–512. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Nai, A., and P. Sciarini. 2015. "Why 'Going Negative'? Strategic and Situational Determinants of Personal Attacks in Swiss Direct Democratic Votes." *Journal of Political Marketing* 1–31. doi:10.1080/15377857.2015.1058310.

Nai, A., and A. Walter. (Eds.). 2015. *New Perspective on Negative Campaigning. Why Attack Politics Matters*. Colchester: ECPR Press.

Nai, A., and J. Maier. 2018. "Perceived Personality and Campaign Style of Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump." *Personality and Individual Differences* 121:80–3.

Nai, A., and H. B. Seeberg. 2018. "A Series of Persuasive Events. Sequencing Effects of Negative and Positive Messages on Party Evaluations and Perceptions of Negativity." *Journal of Marketing Communications*. 24 (4):412–432.

Nai, A., Y. Schemeil, and J.-L. Marie. 2017. "Anxiety, Sophistication, and Resistance to Persuasion: Evidence from a Quasi-Experimental Survey on Global Climate Change." *Political Psychology* 38 (1):137–56.

Norris, P., and R. Inglehart. 2018. Cultural Backlash. Trump, Brexit, and Authoritarian Populism. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Oliver, J. E., and W. M. Rahn. 2016. "Rise of the Trumpenvolk: Populism in the 2016 Election." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 667 (1):189–206.

Ostiguy, P. 2009. "The High and Low in Politics: A Two-Dimensional Political Space for Comparative Analysis and Electoral Studies." University of Notre Dame. Kellogg Institute Working Paper 360, July 2009. https://kellogg.nd.edu/publications/workingpapers/WPS/360.pdf

Polk, J., J. Rovny, R. Bakker, E. Edwards, L. Hooghe, S. Jolly, J. Koedam, F. Kostelka, G. Marks, G. Schumacher, et al. 2017. "Explaining the Salience of Anti-Elitism and Reducing Political Corruption for Political Parties in Europe with the 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey Data." *Research & Politics* 4 (1):1–9.

Reinemann, C., T. Aalberg, F. Esser, J. Strömbäck, and C. H. de Vreese. 2016. "Populist Political Communication: Toward a Model of Its Causes, Forms, and Effects." In *Populist Political Communication in Europe*, edited by T. Aalberg, F. Esser, C. Reinemann, J. Strömbäck, and C. H. de Vreese, 12–25. New York, NY: Routledge.

Ridout, T. N., and J. L. Holland. 2010. "Candidate Strategies in the Presidential Nomination Campaign." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 40 (4):611–30.

Ridout, T. N., and K. Searles. 2011. "It's My Campaign I'll Cry If I Want to: How and When Campaigns Use Emotional Appeals." *Political Psychology* 32 (3):439–58.

Roese, N. J., and G. N. Sande. 1993. "Backlash Effects in Attack Politics." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 23 (8):632–53.

Rooduijn, M. 2014. "The Nucleus of Populism: In Search of the Lowest Common Denominator." *Government and Opposition* 49 (4):573–99.

Rooduijn, M., and T. Pauwels. 2011. "Measuring Populism: Comparing Two Methods of Content Analysis." *West European Politics* 34 (6):1272–83.

Rooduijn, M., S. de Lange, and W. Van der Brug. 2014. "A Populist Zeitgeist? Programmatic Contagion by Populist Parties in Western Europe." *Party Politics* 20 (4):563–75.

Rubenzer, S. J., T. R. Faschingbauer, and D. S. Ones. 2000. "Assessing the US Presidents Using the Revised NEO Personality Inventory." *Assessment* 7 (4): 403–19.

Schmuck, D., J. Matthes, and H. Boomgaarden. 2017. "Austria. Candidate-Centered and Anti-Immigrant Right-Wing Populism." In *Populist Political Communication in Europe*, edited by T. Aalberg, F. Esser, C. Reinemann, J. Strömbäck, and C. H. de Vreese, 85–98. New York, NY: Routledge.

Skaperdas, S., and B. Grofman. 1995. "Modeling Negative Campaigning." *American Political Science Review* 89 (1):49–61.

Stanley, B. 2008. "The Thin Ideology of Populism." *Journal of Political Ideologies* 13 (1):95–110.

Stanyer, J., S. Salgado, and J. Strömbäck. 2017. "Populist Actors and Communicators or Political Actors as Populist Communicators. Cross-National Findings in Perspective." In *Populist Political Communication in Europe*, edited by T. Aalberg, F. Esser, C. Reinemann, J. Strömbäck, and C. H. de Vreese, 353–64. New York, NY: Routledge.

Steenbergen, M. R., and C. Ellis. 2006. "Fear and Loathing in American Elections: Context, Traits, and Negative Candidate Affect." In *Feeling Politics. Emotion in Political Information Processing*, edited by D. P. Redlawsk, 109–33. New York, NY: Palgrave.

Swanson, D. L., and P. Mancini. 1996. *Politics, Media, and Modern Democracy: An International Study of Innovations in Electoral Campaigning and Their Consequences*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Thorson, E., Ognianova, E., Coyle, J., and F. Denton. 2000. Negative political ads and negative citizen orientations toward politics. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertisin*, 22 (1):13–40.

Van Zoonen, L., and C. Holtz-Bacha. 2000. "Personalisation in Dutch and German Politics: The Case of Talk Show." *Javnost-the Public* 7 (2):45–56.

Volkens, A., P. Lehmann, T. Matthiess, N. Merz, and S. Regel. 2016. *The Manifesto Data Collection. Manifesto Project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR)*. Version 2016b. Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB).

Walter, A. S., and R. Vliegenthart. 2010. "Negative Campaigning across Different Communication Channels: Different Ballgames?" *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 15 (4):441–61.

Walter, A. S., and A. Nai. 2015. "Explaining the Use of Attack Behaviour in the Electoral Battlefield: A Literature Overview." In *New Perspectives on Negative Campaigning: why Attack Politics Matters*, edited by A. Nai and A. S. Walter, 97–114. Colchester: ECPR Press.

Walter, A. S., W. van der Brug, and P. van Praag. 2014. "When the Stakes Are High: Party Competition and Negative Campaigning." *Comparative Political Studies* 47 (4):550–73.

Watts, A. L., S. O. Lilienfeld, S. F. Smith, J. D. Miller, W. K. Campbell, I. D. Waldman, S. J. Rubenzer, and T. J. Faschingbauer. 2013. "The Double-Edged Sword of Grandiose Narcissism Implications for Successful and Unsuccessful Leadership among US Presidents." *Psychological Science* 24 (12):2379–89.

Wiesehomeier, N. 2016. "Measuring Populism Using Expert Surveys." Paper prepared for presentation at the Team Populism Conference, BYU University, January 28–29.

Witte, K., and M. Allen. 2000. "A Meta-Analysis of Fear Appeals: Implications for Effective Public Health Campaigns." *Health Education & Behavior* 27 (5): 591–615.

Wodak, R., M. KhosraviNik, and B. Mral. 2013. *Right-Wing Populism in Europe: Politics and Discourse*. London: Bloomsbury.

Yoon, K., B. E. Pinkleton, and W. Ko. 2005. "Effects of Negative Political Advertising on Voting Intention: An Exploration of the Roles of Involvement and Source Credibility in the Development of Voter Cynicism." *Journal of Marketing Communications* 11 (2):95–112.

AUTHOR NOTE SECTION

Alessandro Nai is Assistant Professor of Political Communication and Journalism at the Department of Communication Science, University of Amsterdam. His research focuses on political communication, voting behaviour, political psychology, and campaigning effects, and he is currently directing a research project that maps the use of negative campaigning in elections across the world.